

PSB A-2

August 13, 1951
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PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD

MINUTES

2:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday August 13, 1951
Director's Office, Psychological Strategy Board building

Present:

Members:

Lt. General W. Bedell Smith, Director of Central Intelligence,
Acting Chairman
Mr. James E. Webb, Under Secretary of State
Mr. Robert Lovett, Deputy Secretary of Defense

Others:

Mr. Gordon Gray, Director, Psychological Strategy Board
Col. Armand Hopkins, JCS Representative
Major General John Magruder, Department of Defense
Mr. Frank Wiener, Central Intelligence Agency
Mr. Charles E. Johnson, Acting Executive Secretary, Psychological
Strategy Board
Mr. Robert G. Lfteland, Secretary

PROGRESS REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR (PSB D-1)

1. In addition to his statement in Progress Report by the Director (PSB D-1), Mr. Gray commented that efforts are being made to recruit individuals for permanent appointment to the staff of the Psychological Strategy Board. (PSB). He noted that Task Panel "A" (PSB D-1/1) was the outgrowth of a meeting at the White House in which Assistant Secretaries of State Rush and Barrett had participated.

PROCEDURE FOR CONDUCT OF BOARD BUSINESS

2. The board agreed that it would meet only when there are important problems to discuss. The Acting Chairman and the Director will schedule meetings on a rotation basis at any one of the three Agencies at the convenience of the board. The members are free to bring their alternates as they deem desirable.

NSC review(s) completed.

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3. In the matter of briefing, Mr. Gray suggested that his staff brief the members' alternates a few days before meetings of the board. The alternates would then brief the members in advance of board meetings. General Smith and Mr. Lovett favored this procedure. Mr. Lovett urged that papers be held to a minimum for security reasons. Mr. Webb stated that he had not decided how to handle the briefing problem.

4. To prevent problems being placed before the board for decision until the members have had a chance to study them, it was the consensus that the Director should determine whether a problem is within the competence of the board and whether it is necessary for the PSB staff to present its views to the PSB.

LIST OF PROBLEMS OF INTEREST TO THE BOARD (PSB D-2)

5. Mr. Gray, in presenting his views on List of Problems for the Director and Staff in Order of Work Priority (PSB D-2), called the board's attention to paragraph 4 in which he states his concern that the board should not assume too many problems without careful consideration. He said this document is an effort to translate NSC papers into action. It is necessary to convert NSC policies into specific objectives and formulate plans which will achieve these objectives. As the problems listed in Sections II-A, II-B and II-C on page 2 are solved, the remaining problems will become clearer. The staff intends to give top priority to the substantive problems I through II-C which fall generally into a category of psychological strategy planning not previously initiated. Section II-D will then be considered. Section II-E will be considered concurrently inasmuch as these problems are largely concerned with relationships. Mr. Gray explained that it is not necessary to reconcile differing definitions as to what psychological operations mean because the same work is necessary under either concept. Consequently, it was decided to list the problems facing the PSB to provide the board with specific terms of reference which would enable it to get on with its work. Therefore, the list of problems (PSB D-2) illustrates the area of interest of the PSB and the Staff. At the same time it provides for Mr. Gray the basis for planning a functioning staff organization.

6. General Smith said that the list of problems appears to be monumental. He asked Mr. Gray how he expected to accomplish these projects and still attack current problems. Mr. Gray replied that the Staff intends to use ad hoc groups whenever necessary on new problems. General Smith said that in his opinion the PSB staff would require many reinforcements to accomplish the work outlined in PSB D-2. He believed that completion of the problems listed would require two years of effort by the PSB staff and that there was not that much time available. He said that the problems listed in Sections I-A (4), I-A (5), and I-A (7) are enough to keep the PSB staff busy for quite some time.

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In addition, as he looked over the list of problems, it appeared that many others were going to require work by the staff in the very near future. He noted, as an example, that the problem in Section II-K had not yet been assigned a work priority. However, it is a problem which must be met right now.

7. Mr. Webb said that the Kremlin has a special group which devotes all of its efforts to maximize the strength of the USSR to fractionate and weaken that of the United States. He hoped that the members would conceive the function of the PSC as drawing together U. S. efforts in the same way as the Kremlin group does for Russia. Moreover, he believed the board should discuss further many of the problems listed in PSC D-2 before the Staff completed its work and reaches a final position on the problems. He said surveys take time and that we should not overlook each board member's ignorance of the work of other agencies. He looked upon the PSC as a central place for the members to meet, discuss problems and make policy. The PSC should be a central place where guidance would be available. It would give Mr. Webb the feeling that here is a group of knowledgeable Government Officials who can meet our major problems in the psychological area.

8. Mr. Lovett said that this list is an encyclopedic approach and gives the board something to shoot at. He suggested that the board approve the document (PSC D-2) as an identification of problems which call for discrimination as to which should be undertaken first. He suggested that the board undertake as a matter of urgency the problems listed in Section I-A (4), I-A (5) and I-A (?). This will enable the board to find out what is being done by Government agencies, what general directives they are following and what they plan to do. Mr. Webb agreed with Mr. Lovett and said that if these three problems were worked out, the PSC would then know what the agencies in the U. S. Government are working on. It could bring together whatever additional resources are necessary to achieve our goals and could make the necessary plans for any gaps which might be found to exist. General Smith agreed with: a) the above, b) that the staff of the board should undertake the necessary work in connection with these three points; and c) that the board should consider at a later date the other problems listed in the document. Mr. Gray said that the list will naturally be subject to constant revision. He suggested that the staff, in addition to the study of Sections I-A - (4), I-A - (5) and I-A - (?), be allowed to take up any urgent matter which the board might direct.

SECTION II-D of PSC D-2

9. The board discussed at length the problem stated in this section of the paper. It was the consensus of the board that the Russians are planning some disruptive action to embarrass us. Possibly they will reaffirm their disarmament suggestions and intensify their peace drive.

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It will have the same old sugar coating and will attempt to show that the United States is preventing disarmament in the world. The Shvernik letter possibly gives a guide to the Russian attitude. No doubt the Russians will say to small countries "if you don't go along with us and accept our position, you must bear the consequences". The Board agreed that the United States must take action to meet these Russian maneuvers both abroad and in the United States.

SECTION III-E of PSB D-2

10. Mr. Gray said that he planned to have a Special Assistant handle the relationships of FSB with congressmen and representatives of private agencies who are interested generally in psychological developments. He does not anticipate any problems in this connection. The main thing will be to keep others from doing things we don't want them to do rather than the need to encourage cooperation by outsiders. Mr. Webb asked Mr. Gray if he intended to use other executive agencies of the Government to talk to representatives of private groups. Mr. Gray said that he would use Government agencies but that it would be necessary to have someone available in FSB to talk with them so that they feel they are being given consideration. General Smith believed it would be desirable for Mr. Gray to have such an officer to deal with interested private agencies. Mr. Lovett said that the Department of Defense would handle most inquiries itself but that it would push off general inquiries to the FSB. It was the consensus of the Board that the procedure outlined by Mr. Lovett should be followed.

ORGANIZATION, FUNCTIONS, AND BUDGET (PSB D-3)

11. The Board's consideration was limited to page 5 of PSB document D-3. In explaining this estimate, Mr. Gray said that he expects that the staff will be increased somewhat to meet the problems the FSB must handle. However, he believed that any increase would be reasonable and in no case would the staff be increased to anywhere near double the size called for in the document. The Board agreed that the necessary funds would be provided from appropriate Agency budgets.

OTHER BUSINESS

12. Mr. Gray discussed two papers as examples of problems which contain psychological implications. He asked that the members caution their Agencies to make available to the FSB copies of papers of importance to the work of the Board and its Staff. The members agreed that they would instruct their agencies to cooperate in this matter.

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13. General Smith discussed the question of preventing uncontrolled activity in the psychological field now that the PSB has been organized. He said that there is a need to develop an over-all psychological strategy plan. Other Agencies and the Army, which is concerned only with the tactical military phase of operations would then be able to carry out assigned missions. General Magruder stated that he would discuss the Army's role with Mr. Lovett (who had left the meeting) and that the Department of Defense would handle the matter internally. He said that the Services would deal with the Board through the JSPD which was established for this purpose. General Magruder said that two papers are being prepared concerning the Army's interpretation of its function and that copies will be submitted to the PSB. It was the consensus that an over-all psychological strategy plan should be developed so that all activity in the Government is in consonance with it.

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